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RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 6912
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT 4610
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RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 7750
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 1842
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DEPARTMENT FOR PA, NEA/ARN, INR/IC/CD, INR/R/MR:STHIBEAULT AND
JMCCARTER, VOA NEWS CA, NEA/PPD:CBOURGEOIS, AZAIBACK, AND
AFERNANDEZ, IIP/G/NEA-SA MDAVIDSON
WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC
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TAGS: KMDR PREL KPAO OPRC SY

SUBJECT: Golan, Rice, Lebanon, Palestinian Territories, Iraq,
SyriaIran (6/27)

¶11. Summary: Syrian papers on June 27 marked the 33rd anniversary of the liberation of Al-Qunaytirah with reports and articles glorifying the "heroism" and sacrifices of Syrian forces during the October 1973 war and stressing that the occupied Golan will definitely return to Syria. Papers cited a lecture by Deputy Foreign Minister Dr. Faysal al-Miqdad in Al-Qunaytirah on June 26 in which he said that "the liberation of the occupied Arab territories, headed by the Syrian Golan, is the top priority of President Asad's policy." Al-Miqdad added, "the Syrian people and their leader Bashar al-Asad strongly believe that the Golan will return to the motherland, Syria."

Independent al-Watan quoted a well-informed diplomat as saying that US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice will visit the Palestinian Territories, with "an amended Roadmap." The visit will be within a larger tour that Rice is going to take in the region in a couple of weeks, the source said. The tour will include Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and other countries. The source added that Rice's goal will be to put together the two quartets: the Arab one and the international one.

Independent al-Watan cited a report that the number of Iraqi refugees in Syria has risen by 200,000 since the last estimate ten weeks ago, to reach 1.4 million. The report said that the Syrian government is in need of \$60 million to provide medical and social assistance to these refugees, but has so far received only \$12 million.

All papers featured a statement by Syrian Ambassador in Tehran Hamed Hassan made during a celebration at the Syrian embassy in Tehran on the occasion of the formation of the Syrian-Iranian Friendship Association on June 26. Hassan confirmed the strength of historic Syrian-Iranian relations, adding, "the two countries are determined to enhance their relations in all fields, which would benefit them both and benefit the entire region."

End of summary.

¶12. Selected Headlines:

"UNIFIL forces are placed on alert in South Lebanon. The Lebanese army continues its confrontations in the north. The national

opposition warns against the governing team's maneuvers to seize the presidency: A plan for a comprehensive change in Lebanon is underway" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 6/27)

"The Arab League denounces assault against UNIFIL forces in Lebanon" (Government-owned Tishreen, 7/27)

"AFP: Targeting UNIFIL forces in Lebanon targets Hezbollah" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 6/27)

"Israel rules out a political agreement with the Palestinian Authority. Lavrov in the region to settle dispute among Palestinians and to prevent a catastrophe" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 6/27)

"Hanieh welcomes dialogue among Palestinian parties. The tripartite meeting does not bring anything new" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 6/27)

"Palestinian refusal and Russian slackness about naming Blair as a peace envoy in the International Quartet" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 6/27)

"The White House expects a difficult summer in Iraq" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 6/27)

"Iraqi authorities arrest Sunni Minister of Culture on charge of terrorism" (Independent al-Watan, 6/27)

"Violent clashes in al-Diwanieh. Occupation forces enhance forces in southern Iraq. Bush reiterates support for al-Maliki government. Talabani in Tehran" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 6/27)

"Rice is due in the region" (Independent al-Watan, 6/27)

"Republican Senator Lugar: The US faces the danger of international failure. A new strategy must be adopted in Iraq" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 6/27)

"Syrian Ambassador in Tehran: We are determined to promote bilateral relations in all fields" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 6/27)

13. Editorial Block Quotes:

"It Is a Policy of Killing"

Umar Jaftali, an editorialist in government-owned Tishreen, wrote (6/27): "The Bush administration wants the world to be a subservient follower of its policies, and it does not mind violating all ethical values and divine precepts to realize this objective.

"What proves this is US practices in Iraq and Afghanistan....

"Washington is pursuing a policy of killing, promotion of terrorism, and pleasure in torturing people in Abu Ghurayb, Guantanamo, and secret prisons....

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"Don't neoconservatives in the Bush administration, who claim to be advocates of law and freedom, feel ashamed when they bless the culture of violence and killing, support Israel's crimes, and bring mercenaries like Black Water to persist in human rights violations?

"The United States has lost its credibility in the Arab region and the rest of the world...."

"Why Are All the Events in Lebanon and Palestine Happening?"

Dr. Issa al-Shammas, a columnist in government-owned Al-Ba'th, wrote (6/27): "What is happening in Lebanon and the Palestinian territories is an extension of what is happening in Iraq within the framework of the American policy to build a new Middle East based on blind chaos, division, and conflict among sons of the same country...."

"All leaders in Palestine and Lebanon must shoulder their national and historical responsibilities.... Either preserving the land, the identity, and the country or losing everything and falling into the trap of the American plan of capitulation and hegemony...."

"Mere Questions about Lebanon"

Ibrahim Darraji, an editorialist in independent al-Watan, wrote (6/27): "The security breaches in Lebanon, which are accompanied by an escalating political crisis, are part of the American plan to spread chaos in the region...."

"The pro-government team in Lebanon is providing cover for those involved in the bombings and assassinations, which serve the purposes of known forces and countries...."

"The New Assignment"

Dr. Sa'id Musallam, a commentator in government-owned Al-Thawra, wrote (6/27): "The British people, who forced Blair to resign, will not be happy with his appointment as envoy to the International Quartet, which has so far offered nothing other than doses of despair and frustration and response to Israeli demands, with blessings from the American master, and which promises further concessions in Blair's new era...."

"Countries of the region, where Bush and Blair bet on polishing their images through the colors of death and chaos and symphonies of sectarian violence and civil infighting, did not, and will not, get from these peace activists anything other than deterioration, division, and one storm after another...."

Corbin